

Defending Mayavada

harekrishna.com says:

“Yes, it's true that our books strongly criticize Mayavada (the theory that all variety and individuality are illusion) and Advaitavada (the theory that the only truth is impersonal undifferentiated oneness).”

Well for a start Advaita is critical to Mayavada and that variety and individuality are illusion, is really meaning they are not what they appear to be... which they're not and Iskcon is saying the same thing, since it accepts the existence of ahamkara which they translate as false ego. In fact many hallmarks are there between Advaita Vedanta and Iskcon philosophy, which just makes it even more amazing how they rip into it so much. The great Mayavada scholars gave a renaissance of epistemology and ontology. They signified knowledge into pramatr - the subject, the knower of the knowledge, pramana - the cause of the knowledge and prameya - the object of knowledge.

According to these monistic theories, the Ultimate Reality is ultimately pure undifferentiated oneness. And all variety and individuality are but products of illusion. Accepting this view, one logically has to ask: Where does this illusion come from? This is a question that Mayavada and Advaitavada can't answer. If only oneness exists, illusion cannot also exist, because then we would have twoness—duality—not oneness. And if we say that twoness only seems to exist—that its existence is but an illusion—then we're back where we started, and going around in a circle.